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## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN CHARLOTTE COUNTY ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS



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**Port Charlotte, Fla.** — The Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged the 2018 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps tool released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study highlights the many community factors that influence health and uses established data, much of which is available from the department at [www.FLHealthCHARTS.com](http://www.FLHealthCHARTS.com).

“The County Health Rankings show how Charlotte County ranks on factors that influence its overall health ranking. The Rankings show that Charlotte County has strengths in the areas of clinical care, where it ranked 10 out of 67, and health behaviors, where it ranked 11 out of 67,” said Frank Louis Lepore, Health Officer for the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County. “It is only through partnership and collaboration that improvements in the health of Charlotte County residents will continue to be seen.”

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and they emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress across all community partners. The department works in collaboration with local governments, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Charlotte County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Charlotte County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress.

The Community Health Improvement Plan for 2016-2018 includes an initiative to improve access to healthcare for at-risk pregnant women. A subcommittee focused on Maternal and Child Health developed a campaign to increase awareness in the community about temporary Medicaid for pregnant women, with the objective of increasing the percentage of pregnant women entering prenatal care during their first trimester.

“By working together, we have seen more women beginning their prenatal care in the first trimester,” said Magi Cooper, Executive Director of Charlotte County Healthy Start. “Early entry into prenatal care can make a huge difference in the health of both baby and mother.”

According to data from Florida CHARTS, in 2014, 72.2% of pregnant women in Charlotte County received first trimester care, which increased to 74.5% by the end of 2016.

To explore more health indicators in Charlotte County, visit [www.FLHealthCHARTS.com](http://www.FLHealthCHARTS.com).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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